



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

June 22, 2009

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: RECOMMENDATION TO REFORM THE GENERAL RELIEF PROGRAM (ALL DISTRICTS - 3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

As a result of the current recession, there has been a steep rise in the General Relief (GR) caseload. In order to reduce the increasing homeless and indigent population who rely on this program for sustenance, there is a need to develop a comprehensive plan to reform the GR Program. The program detailed below has an estimated cost of \$7.2 million with a resulting savings of \$21.5 million, or a net County savings of \$14.3 million. This does not include the savings in other County departments from the decreased usage of other County services. The program will utilize one-time surplus funds and yield savings of double the original investment. The program pays for itself.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Approve five strategies developed by the Chief Executive Office (CEO), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health Services (DHS), Community and Senior Services (CSS), Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD), Community and Senior Services (CSS), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), designed to reform the General Relief Program.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of DPSS to prepare and sign an amendment to the GR Employability Screening Contract for enhanced employability screening and medical evaluation services. The approval of County Counsel and the CEO will be obtained prior to executing such amendments and the Director will notify the CEO in writing within ten business days after execution. A description of the amendment is attached. (Attachment I)

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

3. Direct the CEO to include the following ordinance staff for DPSS, DHS, DMH and LASD in Final Changes for FY 2009-10:

- ten Registered Nurses to review databases to find the history of medical and mental health services for participants in the General Relief Supplemental Security Income and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program and to be assigned as follows: seven to DHS; two to DMH; and one to LASD;
- five Clerks to assist the 10 Registered Nurses in the above recommendation and to be assigned as follows: three to DHS; one to DMH; and one to LASD;
- eight GAIN Services Workers to manage the additional caseload of Enhanced Services for Unemployable GR Participants and to be assigned in DPSS;
- four GAIN Services Workers to manage the Transition Age Youth Assistance Program for GR and to be assigned in DPSS; and
- two Human Services Administrator Is to oversee the Enhanced Services for Unemployable GR Participants Pilot and the Expansion of the GR Housing Subsidy and Case Management Project and to be assigned in DPSS.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Since 1901, the County has administered the GR Program to provide temporary cash aid to indigent adults who are ineligible for federal or State programs. In FY 2007-08, the County spent a total of \$161 million in assistance for approximately 63,000 GR participants each month. For FY 2009-10, the present economic environment has significantly increased demand for assistance to over 77,000 persons aided each month. It is estimated that the FY 2009-10 GR Program cost will rise to \$200 million.

Currently, there are over 77,000 participants in the GR Program caseload, of whom approximately 45,000 are considered unemployable, either temporarily or permanently, constituting over 58% of the caseload. Additionally, we estimate that as much as 60% of the GR caseload is homeless. Unemployability and homelessness both affect over half of the GR population, and both are targeted in these strategies to reform the GR Program.

Reforming the GR Program must be at the heart of the County's effort to prevent and reduce homelessness among individuals, since at least half of homeless individuals in the County are GR participants. Our goal is to produce a multi-year plan to reduce homelessness among GR participants and reduce the GR caseload by enabling more GR participants to secure employment or State/federal disability benefits. The CEO, DPSS, DMH, DHS, LASD, CSS and DCFS have worked in collaboration to identify strategies to meet this goal, and the following pilot programs are the result. A full description of these programs is included as Attachment II.

Enhancement of GR SSI and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP) – This strategy will expand services to all GR participants pursuing SSI to include a comprehensive medical/mental health assessment and associated write-up needed to support the participant's disability claim for SSI benefits. The enhancement will also include ancillary payments for items such as clothing and shoes, as needed for Social Security Administration appointments.

Expansion of the GR Housing Subsidy and Case Management Program – This strategy will increase the number of housing subsidy slots in the current GR Housing Subsidy and Case Management Project by an additional 500 slots, with a higher monthly subsidy of \$500. The additional slots will be designated for individuals who are potentially eligible for SSI and enrolled in the GR-to-SSI Project, which provides enhanced SSI advocacy services. The County will be reimbursed for the full cost of the rental subsidies for those GR participants who qualify for SSI.

DHS/DMH/LASD Document Retrieval Services – DHS, DMH and LASD staff will locate and provide DPSS with medical records for GR participants who are pursuing SSI and were previously provided health/mental health treatment at DHS, DMH and/or LASD. These records are needed to support SSI disability claims for the GR population, as many of these individuals have limited access to medical care and medical documentation to support their disability claim.

Enhanced Services for Unemployable General Relief (GR) Participants – This strategy will provide enhanced employability assessments to GR participants who have been classified as temporarily unemployable for at least six months. Through this enhanced employability assessment, some participants who were found to be unemployable based on the initial GR employability screening may be found to be permanently unemployable, employable, or employable with restrictions. Participants who are determined to be employable with restrictions will be referred to an employment preparation program designed to assist these participants to find and retain employment. Participants who are found to be employable will be referred to GROW for employment services and participants found to be permanently unemployable will be referred to the County's GR SSI and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program.

Enhanced Services for Youth – This strategy will target some of the 13,000 current GR participants between the ages of 18 – 24 (approximately 8,000 employable and 5,000 unemployable) for subsidized employment opportunities and other education/training services that will be customized for this population. There are two employment projects in this proposal. The first one is collaboration with the Department of Community and

Senior Services (CSS) and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program, funded through the federal stimulus package. This effort will be designed to provide enhanced services to low-income youth, which will include customized training and subsidized employment opportunities through the Summer Youth Program; the second project is through ARRA funding for the CSBG program. This proposal will provide subsidized job opportunities to 425 GROW youth which will consist of jobs at 35 hours per week, with wages of \$10 per hour, for a period of twelve months. Under this proposal, 323 of these homeless youth will also receive homeless assistance benefits. These projects will enable this population to realize their full potential and successfully transition to adulthood and employment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommendations are consistent with the principles of the Countywide Strategic Plan Goal No. 1, Service Excellence, by providing the public with enhanced service, and Goal No. 4, Fiscal Responsibility, by reducing the overall General Relief caseload.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

There will be several funding streams used to fund these strategies, including Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Community Services Block Grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), County Services Block Grant (CSBG)-HR, Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) funds, net County cost (NCC) funds. The total NCC of \$7.2 million is included in the Proposed FY 2009-10 Budget. Initial cost savings projections have shown a net savings to the County of \$14.3 million, due to a \$21.5 million reduction in GR assistance costs from future grant savings and reimbursement of prior grant expenditures and rental subsidy payments through the Interim Assistance Recovery (IAR) Program. These cost savings do not include savings associated with decreased usage of other County services, such as DHS, DMH and LASD. Funding for each strategy is detailed below:

- **Enhancement of GR Supplemental Security Income Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP)** – The total estimated cost of this project is \$2,450,000. The comprehensive medical examinations will average \$500 per participant, and we estimate 4,000 participants will participate. Additionally, ancillary expenses are estimated to be \$450,000. SSI advocacy costs are currently being charged at the rate of 50% to CSBG-HR. Fifty percent of the medical examination costs associated with this enhancement will also qualify for federal reimbursement through CSBG-HR (\$1 million). The remaining amount (\$1,450,000) will be covered with NCC funds. The projected net County cost savings is \$4,517,000.

- **Expansion of the GR Housing Subsidy and Case Management Project** – The total estimated cost of this project for FY 2009-10 is \$2,260,304. This amount includes \$2,250,000 for the issuance of the housing subsidy at \$500 per month per participant. Staffing costs are projected at \$10,304 NCC. Expansion of the housing subsidy will prove to be cost-effective, as housing cost is an allowable federal reimbursement under the Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR) Program. Therefore, as participants qualify for SSI (normally from six to 24 months after application) the full rental subsidy amount issued will be repaid and could be reinvested in this Project. The full amount of \$2,260,304 will be NCC funds. The projected net County cost savings is \$2,122,096.
- **Record Retrieval for GR Participants** – The total cost of this project is \$1,500,000. All costs are for the staff needed to locate, review, and procure the records needed to enhance the application for SSI for our participants. This SSI advocacy cost will also be charged to the CSBG-HR at the rate of 50%. The total NCC is estimated to be \$750,000. The projected net County cost savings is \$4,005,699.
- **Enhanced Services for Unemployable General Relief (GR) Participants** – The total estimated cost for the project is \$1,741,342, which includes \$1 million for the enhanced assessment and \$741,342 for employment services and staffing. The GROW employment services costs will be offset by 50% by using FSET funding. The total NCC is estimated to be \$1,323,729. The projected net County cost savings is \$513,665.
- **Transition Age Youth Assistance Program for GR** – The total cost for this project is \$14,653,548, plus some portion of the \$14.9 million in ARRA/WIA summer jobs youth funding received by CSS. This project is funded through use of federal stimulus funds and NCC. The stimulus funds will be channeled through the Department of Community and Senior Services (CSS), the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) providers, DCFS, and CSBG. The total NCC is estimated to be \$1,412,148. The projected County costs savings is \$3,161,668. The cost for each component is listed below:
 - Transitional Age Youth Housing - \$1,241,400 funded through ARRA/HPRP funds; \$1,412,148 funded through NCC.
 - Summer Jobs Program – funded through ARRA/WIA (CSS received \$14.9 million for all services, a portion of which will be used for this population.)
 - CSBG Subsidized Employment - \$11.6 million, funded through stimulus funds; and
 - Independent Living Program - \$400,000 funded through NCC (DCFS Homeless Prevention Funds).

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In 2006, in response to the homeless crisis, your Board directed the CEO and County Departments to develop a homeless prevention initiative to reduce homelessness. These pilot projects provide a continuum of services that began with the Homeless Prevention Initiative, and support your initial directive. The proposed strategies will address the long-term needs of GR participants and reduce the cost to the County's health and human services infrastructure associated with participants cycling in-and-out of expensive systems. The success of these pilot projects will be an indicator of the direction we need to go to ensure the indigent population of the County of Los Angeles is fully served and is able to: 1) secure housing, and 2) obtain SSI (which includes Medi-Cal) or employment.

This Board Letter has been reviewed by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of these strategies will enhance programs to serve the County's indigent population. Approval will also result in cost reductions related to emergency room visits and incarceration, resulting in savings to the County's Health and Human Service and Justice System. Finally, approval will result in an improved safety net for the County's indigent population by creating improved access to services for homeless individuals.

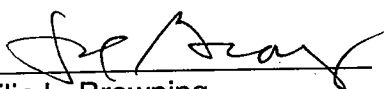
CONCLUSION

The approval of these strategies to reform the GR Program will allow more GR participants to gain a degree of self-sufficiency through faster approval of federal SSI, which includes Medi-Cal, thereby decreasing the number of participants receiving GR benefits, as well as enabling more participants to obtain stable employment, housing and medical attention.

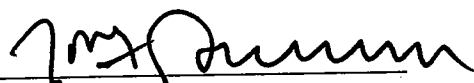
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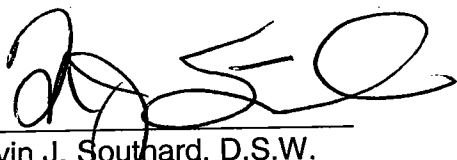
WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer



Philip L. Browning
Director, Department of Public Social Services



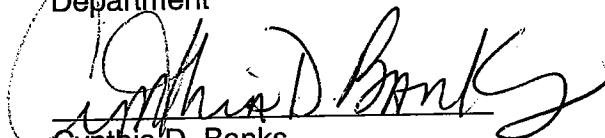
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Services



Patricia Ploehn
Director, Department of Children
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WTF:SRH:MS
GP:JB:cvb
Attachments

c: Acting County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

PROPOSED AMENDMENT FOR QTC EMPLOYABILITY CONTRACT

On September 1, 2007, the contract to conduct GR Employability Screening Services was awarded to QTC Medical Group (QTC). This Contractor provides employability screenings to determine the GR applicant's/participant's employability status. The assessment provided by QTC states that the applicant/participant is either employable or unemployable, and if unemployable, either temporarily or permanently unemployable. The maximum amount of this original Contract, for the three-year period of December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2010, is \$7,728,000. The maximum annual cost of the Contract is \$2,576,000.

An amendment is required for the current contract with QTC to provide:

- comprehensive assessments for participants in the Enhancement of GR Supplemental Security Income Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP); and
- enhanced employability assessments for participants in the Enhanced Services for Unemployable GR Participants Project.

QTC Employability Screening Contract

Name of Contract	Contract Term	Maximum Contract Amount	Maximum Annual Contract Cost
Employability Screening	December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2010	\$7,728,000	\$2,576,000
Amendment – GR-to-SSI (Medical Evaluation)	July 30, 2008 to July 29, 2009	\$200,000	\$200,000
Proposed Amendment – GR SSIMAP (Medical Evaluation)	August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2010	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Proposed Amendment – Enhanced Employability Screenings	August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2010	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

Enhancement of GR Supplemental Security Income Medi-Cal Advocacy Program

On July 30, 2008, the Employability Screening Services for General Relief Applicant/Participants Contract was amended to include comprehensive medical/mental evaluations for physically and mentally disabled participants in the General Relief (GR) to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Project, for the purpose of providing comprehensive medical documentation in support of their SSI application. The term of the amendment was effective July 30, 2008 through July 29, 2009. The amendment cost is \$200,000, financed with 100 percent net County cost (NCC).

An amendment is required for the current contract with QTC, to provide comprehensive medical/mental evaluations to all the General Relief participants in GR SSIMAP. The total cost of this amendment will not exceed \$2,000,000, 50% NCC and 50% federal revenue through CSBG-HR. Each comprehensive medical/mental health evaluation will cost approximately \$500. The Enhancement of GR SSIMAP Program is targeted for 4,000 GR participants. These GR participants will be referred for a comprehensive medical/mental evaluation when documentation is needed to substantiate disability for GR participants pursuing SSI benefits. The comprehensive evaluation will be comprised of some of the following components:

- a) Comprehensive Physical Examination
- b) Review of Records, including medical and work history (up to ½ inch thick)
- c) Completion of Medical Source Statement
- d) Electrocardiogram (EKG)
- e) X-ray (2 views) of one body part
- f) Laboratory blood test
 - 1) Comprehensive Metabolic Panel
 - 2) Complete Blood Count
 - 3) Urinalysis

Based on the results of the evaluation, QTC will produce a write-up that conveys the full story of the GR participant's past and present disabling condition. The write-up will include a description of the physical and/or mental impairments considered to meet the criteria for a single or combination of SSA Disability Listing. It will also contain a comparison of the clinical findings and symptoms specified in the SSA Listing with the findings recorded in the participant's medical record provided by any treating professional.

The County will realize future grant savings due to these participants moving to SSI/SSP, as well as additional income from reimbursement of prior GR grant costs through the Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR) Program. There will also be an unknown cost savings as a result of decreased usage of other County services, such as DHS medical services.

Enhanced Services for Unemployable GR Participants Project

The total cost of this amendment will not exceed \$1,000,000. Each comprehensive assessment will cost approximately \$200. The Enhanced Services for Unemployable GR Participants Project is targeted for 5,000 GR participants who have been classified as Temporarily Unemployable for either six or 12 months. These GR participants will be referred for a comprehensive assessment when the disability is about to expire. The comprehensive assessment will be comprised of some of the following components:

- a) Comprehensive Physical Examination
- b) Review of Records, including medical and work history (up to ½ inch thick)
- c) Completion of Medical Source Statement
- d) Electrocardiogram (EKG)
- e) X-ray (2 views) of one body part

- f) Laboratory blood test
 - 1) Comprehensive Metabolic Panel
 - 2) Complete Blood Count
 - 3) Urinalysis

Based on the results of the enhanced employability screening, QTC will provide a write-up that conveys and justifies the GR participants' employability status. Those GR participants who are found to be employable, will be referred to the GR Opportunities for Work (GROW) Program for work related activities to help them find employment. Those GR participants who are found to be permanently unemployable will be referred to the GR SSIMAP Program to transition to SSI/SSP. Once approved for SSI/SSP, their GR benefits will be recoverable through the Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR) Program. Those GR participants who have been temporarily unemployable for 12 months and are found to be employable with restrictions will be referred to a new GROW component developed to find suitable employment opportunities.

The County will realize future grant savings due to these participants moving to SSI/SSP and employment, and there will be additional income generated when GR payments are repaid through the IAR Program. As with the Enhancement of GR Supplemental Security Income Medi-Cal Advocacy Program, there will also be an unknown cost savings as a result of decreased usage of other County services, such as DHS medical services.

ENHANCEMENT OF GENERAL RELIEF SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME MEDI-CAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM (GR SSIMAP)

DPSS is proposing to expand the services provided through the General Relief Supplemental Security Income Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP).

Background

The GR SSIMAP provides advocacy services to help physically and mentally disabled General Relief (GR) participants apply for SSI, and obtain early SSI approval. Currently, there is a total of 76 GR SSIMAP staff (including Social Services Supervisors) who service a caseload of approximately 10,000 GR participants.

Overview of New Services

One of the major obstacles GR participants encounter is accessing medical and mental health treatment and securing the associated medical and mental health documentation needed to substantiate their disability claim for SSI benefits.

This proposal will address this need by offering GR participants in GR SSIMAP the following additional services which are currently only available to GR-to-SSI Project participants:

- A medical and mental health evaluation and associated medical and mental health documentation needed to substantiate the disability claim for SSI benefits, to be provided by a contracted medical provider who will conduct disability evaluations and provide a write-up on the evaluations in support of the SSI application. QTC Medical Group, Inc., the current provider of employability screening, will be the contractor for this item.
- Ancillary payments for items such as, clothing, shoes and personal hygiene expenses, if needed to comply with the SSI application process.

Target Population

The target population of this strategy is all participants enrolled in the GR SSIMAP Program. Currently, only the 1,000 GR participants who have been aided for the longest period of time will receive the additional services. These services include medical and mental health evaluations and associated medical and mental documentation, as well as the ancillary payments.

EXPANSION OF THE GENERAL RELIEF HOUSING SUBSIDY AND CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

One of the major challenges facing the General Relief (GR) population is homelessness. Because these individuals lack a permanent place to live, they lack the stability needed to prepare themselves for the workforce and/or seek other means of support, e.g., SSI benefits. To assist this population overcome these barriers, we are proposing to increase the number of subsidy slots by 500 at a rate of \$500 per subsidy in our existing General Relief Housing Subsidy and Case Management Project.

Background

Currently, the Department offers 900 funded rental subsidies to homeless GR participants at a subsidy rate of up to \$300 per month. Of the 900 subsidy slots, 300 are designated for individuals who are potentially eligible for SSI; 300 are designated for individuals who are participating in GROW; and 300 are designated for individuals who are chronically homeless. Individuals participating in this Project are required to contribute \$136 of their monthly GR grant towards their rent. Additionally, individuals are offered a one-time moving assistance, up to \$500, to cover expenses associated with moving into permanent housing.

Overview of New Services

The additional 500 slots will be designated for individuals who are potentially eligible for SSI and are enrolled in GR-to-SSI Project, which provides enhanced SSI advocacy services to the longest term GR participants. These additional slots will be offered at a monthly rate of \$500. The increased amount of the subsidy is necessary due to the lack of affordable housing in Los Angeles County. Additionally, the participant's contribution towards their monthly rent will be reduced from \$136 to \$75. This reduction will allow participants to retain a larger portion of their monthly grant to meet their basic needs and will encourage participants to sign-up for the subsidy. To the extent that participants qualify for SSI, the entire subsidy will be recovered by DPSS through the Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR) Program, and could be reinvested into this program.

Target Population

This proposal will expand the current target population to include up to 500 GR participants in the GR-to-SSI Project. This will include long-term GR participants and GR participants who are unemployable and frequent/high-cost users of other County services (e.g., frequent users of DHS emergency rooms).

RECORD RETRIEVAL FOR GENERAL RELIEF PARTICIPANTS

The goal of the project is to enable more individuals in L.A. County to qualify for SSI. One of the major obstacles that GR participants face is accessing medical and mental health treatment and securing the associated medical and mental health documentation needed to substantiate their disability claim for SSI benefits. This project will address this need by partnering with the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Health Services (DHS) and Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) to facilitate the acquisition of appropriate health and mental health records that exist in their respective departments. These records are vital to the current SSI advocacy efforts to determine and document eligibility of GR participants for disability benefits.

Background

Currently, the Department's GR SSI and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP) and the GR-to-SSI Program provide assistance to physically and mentally disabled GR participants to apply and obtain early SSI approval, and to become self-sufficient.

Overview of New Services

In order to prepare complete and successful applications for SSI, it is important to include as many pertinent prior health and mental health records as possible. One of the obstacles GR participants encounter is accessing the prior medical and mental health records and associated medical and mental health documentation needed to substantiate their disability claim for SSI benefits. This proposal will address this need by funding additional staff positions within DHS/DMH/LASD to provide document retrieval services on behalf of GR participants.

DHS, DMH, and LASD staff will locate and provide DPSS with medical records for GR participants who are pursuing SSI and were previously provided health/mental health treatment at DHS, DMH, and/or LASD facilities. Staff consisting of registered nurses and clerks will be responsible for the retrieval of these medical records.

Registered Nurses (RN) will review existing departmental databases to determine if GR participants have a history of utilization within the respective department. Nurses will be able to review and make a determination if there is adequate and supportive medical documentation in support of the disability claim. In some instances, RNs may be able to facilitate in strengthening of health and mental documentation needed to verify and/or support the disability claim. DHS, DMH, and LASD staff will work closely with DPSS staff to ensure adequate medical documentation accompanies the initial GR participant's SSI application packet.

Target Population

Individuals who are currently participating in the GR SSI and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program (GR SSIMAP) and the GR-to-SSI Project will be targeted for this project. An estimated 6,240 sets of medical records will be retrieved on behalf of GR participants.

Enhanced Services for Unemployable General Relief (GR) Participants

Under this proposal, GR participants who are temporarily disabled for six or twelve months will be referred for a comprehensive medical evaluation to determine their employability status. Participants who are able to work with restrictions will be referred to the General Relief Opportunities for Work (GROW) Program to receive specialized employment services customized for their employment limitations.

Background

The GR unemployable population currently represents 58% of the total GR caseload. Individuals who are employable are referred to GROW; individuals who are deemed permanently unemployable are referred to the County's SSI and Medi-Cal Advocacy Program; and individuals who are temporarily unemployable are not provided with any additional services.

GR participants who claim that they cannot work due to a physical disability are referred to a contracted medical provider for an employability screening. The employability determination is based on a cursory review of the participant's status, and does not involve an extensive evaluation. If the participant is deemed unemployable, the contractor assigns the duration of disability, based on the available information. If they are determined employable, they are referred to the GROW Program.

Individuals who state that they cannot work due to an identified mental health condition are referred to collocated professional county staff from DMH and CSS for a "Needs Special Assistance" (NSA) evaluation. The collocated staff makes a determination of the participant's ability to work, and if the participant is unemployable due to a mental health condition, DMH/CSS deems the participant NSA and assigns the duration of disability based on available information.

Overview of New Services

GR recipients who are temporarily unemployable for six or twelve months will be referred to a medical provider for a comprehensive employability assessment. Those who are determined to be employable with certain restrictions will be referred to GROW for specialized employment services. Those determined to be employable will be referred to regular GROW employment services, and those determined to be permanently unemployable will be referred to the GR SSIMAP Program.

The target population will consist of GR participants who have been designated unemployable for six months or twelve months and are not potentially eligible to SSI.

Employment Program for the General Relief Conditionally Employable

GROW will develop a specialized component for participants who are assessed as employable with restrictions by the contracted medical provider. This component will offer specialized services designed to assist those who are employable with restrictions find and retain employment. These participants will not be subject to the nine-month time limits that apply to employable participants. Although they might be subject to sanctions for noncompliance, penalties will only be imposed after the Case Manager makes several attempts to counsel the participant.

Target Population

The target population will consist of GR participants who have been designated temporarily unemployable for six or twelve months.

Transition Age Youth Assistance Program for General Relief

Under this proposal, a group of 323 homeless youth between the ages of 18 to 24 will receive homeless assistance benefits similar to those offered to adults under the Homeless Prevention Initiative (HPI) projects. Additionally, these 323 Transition Age Youth (TAY) will receive assistance with subsidized employment through two projects, one through partnership with Department of Community and Senior Services (CSS) consisting of summer jobs and one through a contract with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) consisting of a 12-month job program. Finally, a selected subgroup of individuals who are or were in foster care/probation placement will receive additional support from the Independent Living Program (ILP) program managed by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). ILP provides assistance to DCFS and Probation youth who age out of foster care. Youth participants may receive benefits from more than one of these projects simultaneously, which will allow them to take advantage of a complete package of services to help them establish solid financial independence for their future.

Background

The GR Program includes a population of 13,000 youth between the ages of 18 to 24, of whom approximately 8,000 are employable and participating in the General Relief Opportunities for Work (GROW) Program. Over 50% of these TAY are homeless, and only half of them have completed high school. At least 176 of these youth have been identified as former foster youth who recently aged out of foster care.

Overview of New Services

TAY Housing: A group of 323 homeless youth enrolled in GROW will receive assistance consisting of One-time Move-In and Rent/Utility Subsidy with a total cost of \$2,653,548.

This total cost will be split as follows: \$1,241,400 through ARRA Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) funds for participants residing in areas covered by the County's HPRP funds and \$1,412,148 through NCC funds for participants living in any other areas.

- *Summer Jobs Program:* DPSS will partner with CSS to create subsidized employment services for youth. Through ARRA, CSS has received \$14.9 million for youth services. CSS will offer these services through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) providers under its current contracts. DPSS will refer approximately 1,500 youth GROW participants to the WIA providers for subsidized employment during the summer months (May 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009).

- *CSBG Subsidized Employment:* DPSS anticipates receiving \$11.6 million from ARRA for its Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) programs. A portion of this amount will be utilized for the development of a CSBG project to assist a group of 425 TAY participants to be placed into subsidized employment for up to 12 months, working 35 hours per week and earning \$10 an hour. This program will be administered by the South Bay WIB, and we will return to your Board for approval of a subsequent amendment to the DPSS subsidized employment contract with the South Bay WIB.
- *Independent Living Program:* DPSS participants who age-out of foster care, will be referred to DCFS' ILP program. Through this program, TAY participants between the ages of 18 to 21 may attend ILP classes near their home. They may also receive assistance with graduation expenses, auto insurance, education funds, clothing, life skills and vocational training, room and board, and other expenses.

Target Population

- For TAY Housing, the target population will be 323 GROW youth between the ages of 18 to 24 who are currently homeless, or at risk of homelessness.
- For the Summer Jobs Program headed by CSS, the target population will be 1,500 GROW youth between the ages of 18 to 24, with no significant barriers to employment, who can take advantage of subsidized employment during the period of May – September, 2009.
- For the CSBG Subsidized Employment program, the target population will be 425 GROW youth between the ages of 18 to 24, with no significant barriers to employment, who can take advantage of subsidized employment for a period of twelve months, while learning skills that would help them transition into unsubsidized employment after this period. Preference will be given to youth who came out of foster care.
- For the Independent Living Program, headed by DCFS, DPSS, through LEADER tracking, has preliminarily identified 176 GROW youth who came out of foster care, who will be referred to this program. We anticipate identifying additional GR youth who can take advantage of this program.